

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE BROWN COUNTY
VETERANS' RECOGNITION SUBCOMMITTEE**

Pursuant to Section 19.84, Wis. Stats., a regular meeting of the Brown County Veterans' Recognition Subcommittee was held on Tuesday, January 15, 2019 at 4:30 pm in Room 201 of the Northern Building, 305 E. Walnut Street, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

PRESENT: Chair Erickson, Duane Pierce, Ed Koslowski, Ken Corry, Jerry Polus, Joan Brusky
EXCUSED: Louise Dahlke

1. Call Meeting to Order.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Bernie Erickson at 4:30 pm.

2. Approve/Modify Agenda.

Motion made by Joan Brusky, seconded by Ed Koslowski to approve. Vote taken. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

3. Approve/Modify Minutes of December 18, 2018.

Motion made by Duane Pierce, seconded by Jerry Polus to approve. Vote taken. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

4. Welcome New Member Jerry Polus, Former CVSO Officer.

Retired Brown County CVSO Jerry Polus was welcomed as a member to the Subcommittee. He thanked the group for the welcome and indicated his retirement so far has been better than he anticipated it would be.

5. Budget Status Financial Report for November 2018 – Unaudited.

Motion made by Joan Brusky, seconded by Duane Pierce to approve. Vote taken. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

6. 2018 – 2019 Budget Carryover Request.

Motion made by Jerry Polus, seconded by Joan Brusky to receive and place on file. Vote taken. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

7. Update re: Honor Rewards Program.

The numbers in the Honor Rewards Program have not changed since last month. Erickson indicated that he and Polus will make contact with additional businesses in spring to see if they can increase the number of participants.

8. Initial Discussion re: 2019 Veterans Appreciation Day at the Brown County Fair.

Erickson noted he did a google search to see what military event would be having an anniversary in 2019, but did not find anything that would work for a group to honor. Polus noted we have honored Desert Vets, but we have not honored Iraqi and Afghanistani Vets. Ken Corry suggested honoring vets of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation New Dawn which are the more recent conflicts. Erickson feels we should keep it somewhat general to get the most

participation. Ed Koslowski noted we have not honored the spouses or families of veterans yet. Corry also suggested honoring Peacetime Veterans. After further discussion, the group felt this was a good idea and a suggestion was made to use a specific timeframe, such as 1975 – 1990 or something like that. Erickson noted there is still plenty of time to work on this and anyone who has any further suggestions can bring them forward at a future meeting.

Koslowski asked if this year's event will be held on Sunday and it was indicated that that was the plan. Erickson said he heard from only one person at last year's event that did not like it being held on a Sunday, but he heard from a lot of other people who liked it on Sunday because of the reduced admission price that allowed veterans to bring their family members. It was also noted that there did not seem to be any less attendance in the tent compared to when the event was held on Saturday.

Polus suggested an attempt be made to get the Air Force or Navy Band to perform at the event. Erickson suggested the incoming CVSO Officer can look into this with some guidance from Polus. Corry also suggested we could look to see if there are any other events going on throughout the area at the same time as the Fair to see if we could bring in something that way.

9. Report from committee Members Present (Erickson, Brusky, Corry, Dahlke, Habeck, Haskins, Koslowski, Metoxen, Pierce, Polus).

-Erickson informed his fishing club, along with several other organizations, is contemplating holding a fishing tournament on the lower bay and donating a percentage of the proceeds to homeless veterans through the Vets Center. This is in the early planning stages and he will keep this subcommittee informed.

-Brusky did not have anything to report.

-Corry mentioned the RV & Camping Show which will be held January 24 – 27 and noted that military veterans get in free with their military ID on January 25. Guitars 4 Vets will be performing at 1:00 pm and 3:00 pm and the VFW will be answering questions and providing information regarding military benefits at 2:00 pm and 4:00 pm. Gilbert Brown will also be on hand to sign autographs.

Corry also reported that 4th HOOAH will be holding their 2019 Operation Tip Up Ice Fishing Derby on January 19 on Shawano Lake between 8:00 am – 4:00 pm. Prizes will be awarded for the largest northern pike, walleye, bass, perch, crappie and bluegill in both adult and children divisions. 4th HOOAH is localized out of Brown County, but serves the entire state.

Corry also talked about the Brown County Suicide Prevention Coalition. There were 22 suicides in Brown County in 2018 which is down from 40 in 2017 and 43 in 2016. Of the 22 suicides last year in Brown County, 5 (or 22%) were veterans. There is now a Suicide Task Force specific to veterans and law enforcement and first responders. The program does QPR training; question, persuade and refer. This training is something that could be offered throughout the community. Koslowski feels it would be valuable training and is in favor of it being done. Erickson suggested contacting Sheriff Delain, who is a veteran, to see if he could provide any insight as to a place that could be used to conduct training. Erickson also mentioned the Museum as a possible location. Koslowski noted the Radisson is veteran friendly and questioned if Kerry Metoxen could help secure a room to do some training in. Corry informed that veterans make up about 8 – 9% of the population, but commit suicide at a rate of 2 ½ times greater than non-veterans. In Brown County, veterans make up about 7% percent of the population, but 22% of the total suicides. He feels the QPR training would be very beneficial and some other locations that this could possibly take place at were discussed.

Corry concluded by talking about the VHRP; Veterans Housing and Recovery Program. A 17 bed facility in Bellevue just opened up to help veterans and there are currently 16 veterans staying there. The veteran community in Brown County has really stepped up to give to the facility by donating things like computers, toiletries, gift cards, clothing and a number of other items. Pierce noted that

the amount of Christmas baskets his group gave away this year was down because there are so many other veteran groups stepping up to help people and Koslowski added that the number of names of struggling veterans provided by the Veterans Service Office has also gone down. Corry said the Bellevue facility is a recovery program and there are case managers working with the individuals multiple times a week depending on the needs, which range from mental health needs, AODA needs, housing needs and employment needs. Veterans can stay in the facility up to 2 years.

-Koslowski said he has heard comments that the flag at the veterans' memorial at the Arena is tattered and should be replaced. There was a discussion as to who would be responsible for that and Pierce indicated he is going to a meeting later with someone who may know more about this. Koslowski also informed the last event at the Arena before it is torn down is a monster truck event on February 1 and 2. He asked if there will be any type of "un-dedication" ceremony before the facility is torn down, but no one knew what the plans were. Koslowski also mentioned the dedication memorial between the Arena and Shopko Hall and asked if a decision has been made as to where that will be relocated. Erickson said a decision has not been made yet, but it will be included in the design of the new facility which is not yet complete. Koslowski also informed the Vets Center on Ashland Avenue is expanding and will be adding several new offices. Also, on July 13, American Legion 11 will be holding a 100th Anniversary Party at their facility on Irwin Avenue. Peirce noted that that is the same day of the Pearly Gates ride.

Koslowski concluded by reporting the UPS Annual Washington – Lincoln Luncheon will be held on Sunday, February 17 with a reception beginning at 1:00 pm and lunch being served at 2:00 pm at The Woods. The cost is \$13.50 per person.

-Pierce reported Amvets Post 57 will be holding a meat raffle at Pearly Gates on February 16 beginning at 2:00 pm. A meat raffle will also be held on March 9 beginning at 2:00 pm at Harbor Lights Bar on Harbor Lights Road. Pierce shared a photograph that was taken from the bar at sunrise behind a silhouette of some soldiers and said an enlarged copy of the photo will be one of the prizes at the meat raffle.

Pierce concluded by saying the annual Pearly Gates ride will be held on July 13. Raffle prizes this year include a top prize of \$15,000 cash. Tickets are \$100 each and are limited.

Corry informed that at last night's UPS meeting, Ed Koslowski was honored as the Volunteer of the Year. The subcommittee congratulated him and this was followed by a round of applause.

-Polus informed his former office is in transition and the new CVSO, Joe Aulik, will be starting on January 21.

10. **Such other matters as authorized by law. None.**

11. **Adjourn.**

Motion made by Ken Corry, seconded by Joan Brusky to adjourn at 5:18 pm. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Respectfully submitted,

Therese Giannunzio
Administrative Specialist